

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 503
By Gilbert

A RESOLUTION to designate the weeks immediately preceding Memorial Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and New Year's Day holidays as "Safe Driver Awareness Weeks" in the State of Tennessee.

WHEREAS, driver fatigue contributes significantly to traffic accidents that result in death and serious injury to Tennessee motorists and pedestrians; and

WHEREAS, the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration reports that driver fatigue is responsible for over 100,000 crashes per year, crashes which kill 1,500 people and injure 71,00 people; and

WHEREAS, drivers must perform a series of coordinated tasks using their hands, feet, eyes, ears and body movements to drive safely and defensively. The effective performance of such tasks may be dramatically affected by fatigue; and

WHEREAS, driver fatigue and impairment may often be caused or worsened by the use of substances other than alcohol, including herbal remedies, "designer drugs", and sedating medications—both prescription and over-the-counter; and

WHEREAS, Citizens Against Drug-Impaired Drivers reports that of the approximately 43,000 annual motor fatalities in the United States, 10,000 to 15,000 fatalities involve substances other than alcohol; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee law enforcement community is united in its opposition to drivers' use of any substance to the extent that it might impair driving performance; and

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WHEREAS, the Tennessee Department of Safety has been vigilant in its efforts to keep the motoring public informed of the dangers of driving impaired as a result of excessive fatigue or the use of impairing substances other than alcohol, and should be commended for its efforts; and

WHEREAS, in the interest of public safety, it is important to call special attention to the dangers of driving while fatigued or otherwise impaired, as well as the potential for various substances other than alcohol, which, when consumed prior to driving a motor vehicle, impair the driver's ability to safely maneuver a motor vehicle; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE-HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That the weeks immediately preceding Memorial Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and New Year's Day are hereby declared "Safe Driver Awareness Weeks" in the State of Tennessee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we urge that all necessary actions be taken by the appropriate state agencies to publicize these special weeks and, within the limitations of their existing resources, to inform and educate the public throughout the year on the dangers of driving while fatigued or under the influence of any substance, be it alcoholic or non-alcoholic.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.